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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
2/10/11**

The Board of Selectmen met in the Town Hall, Joseph F. Bilotta Meeting Room as scheduled with Paula Bertram, Steven M. deBettencourt, Ernie Sund, Tom Alonzo, Dave Matthews and Town Manager Kerry Speidel present. Meeting opened at 7:07 P.M. with members of the Planning Board; Toby Bakaysa, Joanna Bilotta, Thomas Bodkin, Robert Saiia, Nathan Lockwood and Planning Director, Marion Benson. Also present; Jack Rodriquez, DPW Director and Trish Domigan from VHB.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APPOINTMENTS

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. Summer Street Project -

Paula reviewed what has been taking place with regards to the reconstruction of Summer St.; the Town and the Cities of Leominster and Fitchburg have been working for 2+ years on this project. While we have been successful with getting key state officials on board with this project as Lunenburg's cost is substantial compared to the other two communities we have been less successful than we would have liked in securing funding for the project's design. We have two issues to address during this meeting, we need to involve the Planning Board as this is a component of the Master Plan and need to discuss the Alternatives Analysis versus contract for Preliminary Design; and also entering into a contract with MRPC for land use planning services as they would work with our Planning Board.

Trish informed those present that she was initially approached by Jack to discuss the project and planning phases for the upgrades to Summer Street and reviewed the plans and site layout to date involving the three communities. Beginning in September 2009, the communities have been meeting monthly to discuss the project, and to initiate project planning. The project was presented to the Lunenburg Board of Selectmen on January 5, 2010, and received endorsement to move ahead to secure funding for design and construction of the project.

The Town has been acting as the lead community, and along with the Cities of Leominster and Fitchburg has submitted an application for the MRPC District Local Technical Assistance Program, under the Sustainable Development / Land Use / Zoning Objectives Category, to advance the design of transportation improvements on North Street in Leominster and Summer Street in Lunenburg and Fitchburg. The Summer Street corridor is a pivotal transportation corridor through which a high volume of traffic flows from the Fitchburg City Limits, through Lunenburg, and to North Street in Leominster.

Abutting and nearby land uses from John Fitch Highway in Fitchburg, to King's Corner in Leominster, include commercial - office, commercial- retail, manufacturing, residential, and railroad uses. Within close proximity to this corridor a significant amount of new residential units have been permitted and/or are in the construction phase. These new housing units will increase the traffic volume within the corridor. In addition, new residents will, most likely, demand new services available from the businesses on or around Summer Street. It also appears that the entire drainage structures out there are currently in failure, there are no sidewalks, need to define curb cuts, install granite curbing. Each community has very different issues along this roadway, Leominster is residential, Lunenburg combination of residential, commercial and industrial and Fitchburg has some residential and commercial.

Trish provided the following project history: initiated August 2009, met with Fitchburg in November 2009, MDOT meeting in December 2009 to get support for project, received letters of support from each community and state delegates and submitted a Project Need form to DOT for project, project was approved by MassDOT in spring 2010. Conceptual design developed to determine construction cost of 6.3 million dollars, had meeting with towns and MRPC to discuss design funding on June 1, 2010, met with Mayor of Fitchburg in Sept 2010 to gain support for the project, applied for design support through District Local Technical Assistance Program from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, met with EOHED and Mass Development in November 2010 to discuss design funding options. EOHED offered the following; the state (EOHED and Mass Development) are prepared to contribute \$50k toward the Summer Street/North Street corridor project in order to advance the project to 25% design. In order to do so, the following conditions would apply: at least one 43D PDS with direct access to Summer St must be approved; Mass Development will procure and manage the consultant (VHB) by way of their "house doctor contracts" on behalf of the communities. The scope of work must advance the project to 25% design in 2011; and the municipalities will propose a scope of work that makes the most sense to them and will be responsible for the balance of cost above \$50k.

They also met with Congressman Olver's Economic Director in February 2011. The Congressman is supportive of the project and will be researching design funding opportunities for the project. The next step: design development, estimate for construction cost: 6,300,000. — may change due to added amenities, preliminary design fee is \$174,000; proposed breakdown between the towns is Lunenburg - \$90,644 (as the largest stretch/area of roadway is in Lunenburg), Fitchburg - \$14,223, and Leominster - \$19,133. Discussed the alternative analysis (November 2010 STM vote) for roadway cross section in Lunenburg and expediting the process so as to incorporate with the preliminary design phase, as both Leominster and Fitchburg have committed to funding their portion of design.

North Street in Leominster and Summer Street in both Lunenburg and Fitchburg are functionally classified as Urban Minor Arterial's. The North Street/ Summer Street project limits extend westerly from Main Street in Leominster to John Fitch Highway in Fitchburg for total length of 8,500 feet. The pavement width along the corridor varies from 32 feet at Route 13 to 60 feet at the Leominster/Lunenburg town line, to approximately 45 feet in Fitchburg at the western project limits. The pavement condition is poor, with longitudinal cracking and pavement failure along the entire corridor. There is a non-compliant sidewalk along the north side of North Street within Leominster, and no sidewalks along the project in Lunenburg and Fitchburg. There are no bike accommodations along the entire 1.6 mile length of the project. The drainage system is antiquated consisting of vitrified clay pipe and insufficient drainage structures; there is flooding from roadway runoff occurring on properties down gradient of Summer Street in Lunenburg. The signage, guardrail and pavement markings are non-standard, or missing. The curb cuts along the corridor in Lunenburg and Fitchburg are undefined and/or excessively wide.

According to Trish, because the State Department of Housing & Economic Development is so interested in this project, they have offered us \$50K in left over grant funds to put toward preliminary design. They have attached some strings to this money, including the need to identify at least one additional 43D site along the Summer Street Corridor. Additionally, they have strongly recommended that we work with MRPC regarding land use issues along the corridor. We applied for and received a grant from MRPC for this work. She am hoping to move forward in the near future, however, before doing so, needs to be sure that we are all clear on the scope of the project and that we are all in agreement to move forward.

According to Kerry in order to be able to use the State funds we need to enter into a contract for Preliminary Design; and a contract with MRPC for land use planning services.

Paula's concern is that we don't have much time for looking at a 43D site and the concern is that the Planning Board has enough time to look at this from a Master Planning objective.

Steve questioned the requirements, the guidelines for land size for a 43D site. According to Marion the commercial enterprise, the building needs to be 50,000 square feet. Marion feels that as we're the lead community and have to put the most money into this, we should be the ones to benefit financially and identify where we can place this type of development. This may require a zoning change which would have to be approved by Town Meeting. Need to find interested property owners and possibly discuss with the State and inform them that we are willing to pursue and if we make a good effort to identify and go through the process and ask them how tight is that schedule so that we can go through the planning process.

Fitchburg and Leominster are committed to preliminary design but their costs are substantially lower.

Tom is in support of this project but noted that we have to do the top down approach and need to decide what we're trying to accomplish on that roadway. Questioned what we will be giving up, if we don't go with the Alternative Analysis.

Paula recognized all of the issues on Summer Street and noted that we are committed to improve this roadway, but need to look at three different alternatives to make sure that it's a fit within the community and as such she wants the community involved. Questioned what the Planning Board's thoughts are on this and Dave noted that Town Meeting has already voted on the Alternatives Analysis.

Nathan questioned if the first \$115,000 for design will unlock the money for the whole project. Seems like the biggest risk is we lose funding for the road, the lesser risk is we lose some possibilities that what could be done.

Trish explained the difference between the alternatives analysis and the preliminary plan.

Tom doesn't believe that having to commit to a 43D just to get \$50,000 state funding doesn't seem viable.

Toby thinks that it takes more planning to look at this area is a corridor between the communities and we need to look at the services that we may want to see come into this area, and as such thinks we should take the time to look into this.

Kerry believes that the good thing is that the state has stated that it does like this project.

Marion when you look at a 43D you need to plan for 5 to 10 years down, it's a long term project.

Kerry questioned if there is a way to streamlines the analysis process and concentrate of the preliminary design.

Jack thinks that we can streamline, but that we don't have to have 3 to 4 meetings, and shouldn't be considered an insufficient job if the Alternative Analysis is streamlined. We can streamline the analysis without jeopardizing the input from the public.

Trish noted that realistically she doesn't see how they could even get out there to begin the preliminary design as there is still snow out there and believes that the state is being unreasonable. Think there could be a combination and will talk to the state about extending this out, we should be able to still accomplish and complete an analysis and proceed into design. Think you have to take a step back and decide just what it is that you want.

Trish reviewed the eligibility criteria that MRPC uses in their TIP program and how they are programmed throughout the years. Tip is based upon eligibility of the project and as this plan doesn't have a design they've put it out to 2015. The cost of Preliminary Design is \$174,000. We can apply the State's \$50K, reducing the amount to \$124,000. Both Fitchburg and Leominster have committed to funding their share. At Special Town Meeting, the Town appropriated \$56K for an Alternatives Analysis. Kerry noted that if we modify slightly the Scope of Work for the Alternatives Analysis (i.e. shorten up the process) we can apply the full \$56K to partially cover our share. This is possible, because a good deal of the work to be done under the Alternatives Analysis scope is also part of the Preliminary Design scope of work. This would leave us with the need to identify an additional \$34K in order to proceed with Preliminary Design. At this point, we believe we have exhausted all avenues to fund Preliminary Design and therefore, feel that in order to keep the project moving along, we need to come up with this amount locally.

Joanna questioned why we haven't even begun the Alternatives Analysis as this was voted on in November. Trish reviewed what has been done to date with regards to the Alternatives Analysis and will provide this information to the Planning Board. Tom commented that we did sell this to the people and it was proposed all for the Alternatives Analysis. It may be possible to reduce the number of public hearings down to just one.

According to Kerry, we do have a small balance remaining in this year's Chapter 90 fund, sufficient to cover this amount. The good thing about Chapter 90 is that it's currently available and therefore, we could move ahead without having to waiting for a Town Meeting Appropriation. Another source of funds would be the funds the Town received from the State for approving the 40R (Tri-Town) Project. However, these funds are currently sitting in a Stabilization Fund and cannot be accessed without 2/3 majority vote of Town Meeting. Tom B., for clarification, the issue before us tonight then is do we move ahead with what the state is requesting and move ahead on the 43D.

Kerry would like to have the question asked of the state whether we can receive an extension and work together to expedite the process.

Paula commented that we're looking to the Planning Board for their input as they are the ones that are the most familiar with the zoning in that area and to look at what a pared down Alternatives Analysis. If we need additional funding we look for that in May, we do only one public hearing, etc. whatever we need to do to expedite.

According to Jack, Fitchburg and Leominster have bought into the \$50,000 and if during this process we lose the \$50,000 then we have to go back to the other communities as it changes the numbers and we'll have to get a reconfirmation from them.

Toby commented that on the southerly side going from Fitchburg to Leominster, we're constrained because of the railroad and because of this the growth area lies on the northerly side. To which Trish agreed with as there are a number of vacant sites.

OLD BUSINESS

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

February 15, 2011

February 17, 2011 – Finance Committee Budget Presentation

Being no further business board voted unanimously to adjourn Regular Session at 8:41P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Williams, Chief Administrative Assistant
Board of Selectmen